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MARYLAND READING FIRST

Fact Sheet
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What is the purpose of Maryland Reading First?

The purpose of Maryland Reading First is to prepare children so they can be successful readers by the end of third grade and have the skills necessary to master the content knowledge taught in future grades. Reading First focuses on effective instructional practices with a basis in scientifically-based reading research.

How much money will Maryland Reading First receive and how will it be allocated?

Maryland Reading First is projected to receive \$65.8 million over six years. The vast majority of the funds will go directly to local school systems. In year one, \$9 million was allocated directly to school systems and \$2.2 million was allocated to the State. Of the \$2.2 million to the State, 65% of the funding is to be spent on professional development, 25% on technical assistance, and only 10% on administration.

What are the five components of reading that make up Maryland Reading First?

Maryland Reading First follows the research that stipulates that the following five components must be present in every K-3 reading program:

- Phonemic awareness (the ability to focus on and manipulate the sounds of spoken words)
- Phonics (learning that letters and groups of letters have sounds and make words; phonics is the key to decoding)
- Fluency (reading with speed, accuracy, and expression)
- Vocabulary (knowing the words used in print and the words used to communicate in speaking and writing)
- Comprehension (understanding what is read).

How will reading instruction look in Maryland Reading First schools?

All Maryland Reading First schools will:

- Provide at least 90-minute blocks of uninterrupted time for reading instruction K-3
 - Use one core reading program based on scientific reading research K-3
 - Utilize flexible groups so that students can learn basic skills and then move on to more challenging ones
 - Utilize a system of frequent screenings, progress monitoring, and diagnostic assessments to help teachers quickly identify students who are not making progress so that they can provide those children with immediate supplementary instruction or intervention
 - Have an in-school reading coach whose time is dedicated to helping teachers implement only those strategies based on research
 - Provide extensive professional development in reading for teachers that is focused on translating research into practice.
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***How did
Maryland
Reading First
receive approval?***

All state applications for federal Reading First grants were reviewed by a panel of national and state reading experts identified by U.S. Secretary of Education Rod Paige, the National Institute of Literacy, the National Research Council, National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, and MSDE. Successful states, such as Maryland, received funds under a special formula.